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## Mr. De Koven's "Pilgrims" Gets A First Hearing

By Sylvester Rawling.

REGINALD DE KOVEN'S long-looked-for opera in English, "The Canterbury Pilgrims," got its first performance at the Metropolitan Opera House last night. It is to four acts, the text by Percy MacKaye. Mr. Gatti had staged it richly and it was clear that it had been carefully rehearsed. There was a large, distinguished and interested audience to hear it and, even though there were signs among the staidness of forcing the applause, there was hearty and generous recognition from all over the house of the composer's intention and accomplishment. Too much stress must not be laid upon that, however, because of the proverbial kindness of American audiences, especially of "first nighters."

Mr. De Koven, Mr. MacKaye and all the principal singers were called before the curtain many times.

Mr. De Koven has said publicly that

he has never written before "in the larger operatic form" because he was waiting until he could find a "really good book." In Mr. MacKaye's presentation of an impossible character, the first English poet laureate, on a pilgrimage to Canterbury in April, 1387, adapting to national taste, some of Chaucer's written characters as his companions, Mr. De Koven told me the other day he had found the book. Other learned persons have endorsed Mr. De Koven's opinion. But, for me at least, Mr. MacKaye's creation is too artificial, too palpably made to order, too lacking in real flesh and blood human interest to warrant the faith. His plot is a poor rhymester; a puppet, his Wife of Bath with five husbands buried and looking for a sixth, can't be properly named in The Evening World, and isn't real for a minute; his "Pilgrims" are something never dreamed of on land or sea, and for the rest—what's the use? Of course Mr. MacKaye's book is clever. He has a record of achievements that would assure that. But where is the heart of it all? Not even in the boorishness of his country-bumpkins is there a reflection of the soil.

Upon this foundation Mr. De Koven has built his work "in the larger operatic form," with the result that he has erected a more or less impressive superstructure that is hollow. The main body of the composition, after all, is comic opera, or musical comedy—call it what you will—interesting, amusing, sometimes even imposing, but falling of what would seem to have been Mr. De Koven's larger purpose. Not that he doesn't disclose moments of inspiration. His "Alleluiah" chorus, for instance, is fine, thunderously somber, combining with the expression of devotion, the spirit of "Love is lord of Spring," and the communion of man with all things animate and inanimate, and the simple fellowship with God which the Reformation and the Puritans wiped out and which, unhappily, never has been restored.

Splendid too is the finale as the procession enters Canterbury Cathedral with the trumpets blaring after the manner of Verdi's use of them in the "Triumph scene" in "Aida," the choir boys and the Pilgrims chanting their hymn to St. Thomas, which is another of Mr. De Koven's good things. And so, as the curtain falls, we forget the puerile "Elegance, O to be there with thee in olive-silvered Italy," and recall the sentiment, if not the music, of "Amor vincit omnia" and lament that the three-hour opera wasn't all on the level of the last fifteen minutes. The orchestral introduction to the third act, too, was worth hearing. In fact, Mr. De Koven throughout the opera furnished a worthy orchestral cushion upon which the action could rest.

Rarely beautiful were the scenes of the Tabard Inn at Southwark and of the garden of the One Nine-Fin Inn at Babbington. Fine was the presentation of the west front of Canterbury Cathedral. Mr. Setti's chorus outdid itself in vigorous singing and the ballet caught the infection.

In mentioning the principal singers one must explain that the English text was expressed mostly by German, and, to their credit, on the whole very well. Johannes Reimach, as Chaucer, did not impress me as he does when singing in German. Margarete Oster wasn't quite as reliable as I expected her to be as the Wife of Bath; Edith Mason did the best that might be expected with the colorless Friar; and Marie Runderhous, as Johanna, sang better than she impersonated her. Besides the big cast held Basil Ruyssdael, Robert Leinhardt, Paul Althouse, Albert Rees, Max Huch, Malatesta, Schlegel, Laurence, Bayer, Rossi, Audisio, Tegan, Minnie Egner and Marie Tiffany. Mr. Rodanzky conducted with sympathy and appreciation. Some of the changes in the score as printed—not a few—probably were due to him.

Julia Heinrich, American soprano, formerly of the Metropolitan Opera Company, and George Harris Jr., American tenor, were the recital artists of yesterday. Miss Heinrich's programme at Aeolian Hall in the afternoon held songs by Schubert, Schumann, Strauss, Duparc, Debussy, Arthur Poldoski and by her father Max Heinrich. Her accompanist at the piano was Ellis Clark Hamman, one of whose songs she also sang. Mr. Harris at Aeolian Hall in the evening began with a group of French songs that included "Aux Plaisirs, aux delices," more than three hundred years old. Four American songs by Linn Seiler, Marshall Krenochan, Dwight Fiske, and his own "The Soldier's Tent" followed. Also he sang some of Howard Brockway's "Lonesome Town" and a Russian group by Moussorgsky, Rachmaninoff and Grieghaminoff in the original tongue.

Josef Stransky, leader of the Philharmonic Orchestra, is sufficiently recovered from a recent automobile accident to conduct the concert of the Society at Carnegie Hall this afternoon, although "aid in bandages."

## MISS PENELOPE SEARS TO WED NEPHEW OF LATE SENATOR PLATT



Miss Penelope Sears, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Handlen Sears, will be married on March 14 to Sherman Phelps Platt, a nephew of the late Senator Thomas C. Platt. The wedding will be solemnized in the church of St. Thomas's Church. There will be no attendants, and the wedding will be a quiet one.

along Sixth Avenue from Twenty-third to Fifty-ninth Street. April 10 has been designated as "Sixth Avenue Day," when the street will present a carnival appearance.

## Notes in Society

Percy R. Lyne 24 was host last night at a dinner for forty men in the home of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Moses Taylor Lyne, No. 263 Madison Avenue.

Mrs. William M. V. Hoffman gave a luncheon yesterday at No. 35 West Fifty-first Street.

Mrs. Joseph A. O'Neill of New York and Pittsburgh has announced the engagement of her daughter, Miss Margaret Temple O'Neill, to William Howard Taft, 2d, son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry W. Taft of No. 36 West Forty-eighth Street. Mr. Taft is a member of Squadron A, and did service at the Mexican border. He is now on his ranch in Texas. The date of the wedding has not been announced.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Steele of No.



She's forty years old—but still the social favorite

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## ST. PATRICK'S DAY PLANS.

Cardinal Farley and other Prelates will Review Big Parade.

The St. Patrick's Day Celebration Committee has practically completed arrangements. Cardinal Farley and other church dignitaries have announced their intention to review the big parade. Patrick J. Collins of the Irish Men's Association will be Grand Marshal, and Owen McIntee, first aid. Matthew O'Reilly will be second aid and Patrick T. Gillespie Chairman of Arrangements. Patrick J. Lennon is Secretary of the Arrangement Committee.

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will be displayed along the line of march, which will start at Fifth Avenue and Forty-second Street and end at the Harlem River Casino.

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**ASK FOR and GET**  
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The Original  
Malted Milk  
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# The Legislature should enact this bill into law!

On Monday, March 12, a vitally important bill is expected to come up for vote before the New Jersey Assembly.

This bill affects DIRECTLY every business and business man—every farmer—every manufacturer—EVERY CITIZEN in the entire State.

It is a sound, sensible, workable measure to give the Board of Public Utility Commissioners authority to determine how trains should be manned. It empowers this Board to COMPEL railroads to crew every train as the Board shall order.

**This new law WILL ACCOMPLISH the very things for which the "full crew" law was enacted—and in which it has failed:—**

Make sure an adequate, but not excessive crew for every freight and passenger train;

Completely protect both trainmen and public.

**Railroads exist to provide adequate and safe transportation service both for passengers and freight.**

Public interest lies in getting such service.

The railroads must have facilities to move traffic with regularity, despatch—and do it with safety and economy.

The Trustees of the State Chamber through the Bureau of State Research made an exhaustive study of the workings of the "full crew" law. The proposed bill carries out the recommendations of their report.

It is an adequate, effective and workable measure.

Manufacturers, business organizations, the Grange, the press and the State Chamber of Commerce ALL OPPOSE THE EXISTING LAW AND FAVOR THIS NEW BILL!

**Every legislator in this State will feel the responsibility that is placed squarely on his shoulders when the time comes to vote!**

He should be given the expressed wish—direct—of his constituents, each one.

**Write or telephone or otherwise communicate with your Representative in the State Legislature and tell him that you feel that this bill should be enacted.**

He will appreciate your interest.

The time is short; get in communication with him TODAY.

The bill has the hearty endorsement of Boards of Trade and Chambers of Commerce in the leading cities throughout the State; it has the strong support of intelligent, public-spirited citizens.

It should be enacted.

It should pass the Assembly without delay.

We urge YOU to let your Representative know that, in supporting this bill, he is voting as you would have him vote.

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